New Lives for Old

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WHAT HAPPENS IN CALVARY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK AS SEEN BY
A MEMBER OF THE STAFF

By
AMELIA S. REYNOLDS

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MY FAMILY TREE

To FRANK BUCHMAN
who, by the grace of God, won
Samuel M. Shoemaker, Jr.,

To SAM SHOEMAKER
who, by the grace of God, won
Ray F. Purdy,

To RAY PURDY
who, by the grace of God, won me,

This book is dedicated by
"Mrs. R."

FOREWORD

CALVARY House turns a friendly, modern face toward Gramercy Park. Red brick, stained-glass insets in leaded windows, green casements, and much passage in and out of its doors, make it stand up well to its handsome neighbours. It is a convenient, beautiful place in which to live, but it is something more. Just as the church itself stands for formal group-recognition of the need of Christianity, Calvary House stands for informal, personal recognition of the need for Christ.

The two buildings are a permanent centre, from which fly off sparks that light fires near and far. We have the regular congregation and the regular organizations of the Episcopal Church, but everywhere there is also the outsider. Sometimes he comes from curiosity, but oftenest he comes because he has read a book or an article, or met some one that has stirred to life an old longing for a Christ who is the cure for loneliness, aimlessness and sin.

Calvary House was built because of a vision of what it might mean to churches everywhere, as well as to Calvary Church, to have a permanent place, with a staff many of whom are permanent, where any one could see worked out, however imperfectly, a first-century Christian fellowship: a

fellowship and a place that could be returned to. A man might go round the world to forget, but when he came back, here would be a reminder.

I was driving north, a few weeks ago, when I passed a handsome old church a hundred years or more old, in good repair, with well-kept yard, but out of service. The congregation has ceased to come, and its doors are closed. I know of another church which, with its parish house, hums with activity day and night. Every kind of church business is carried on here. It has a parish paper which records its activities; banners which it has won for giving more money to certain church projects than any other church of the same size has given; a children's choir as well as a "grown-up" choir; and parties of every kind and description. But the service has little life, and there is no message in the preaching. This sort of church is really as out of service as the other. A church only fulfils its function if it teaches people to know the Living Christ.

Calvary is more than a local issue. It tries to be a living example of what Christ's message can do to bring ministers and laymen alike to life. A great orator can fill any building, anywhere, but there are not great orators enough to go around. If the world is to go to church, it must be drawn there by ordinary men, ordinary men made extraordinary by the message of Christ.

61 Gramercy Park,
New York City.

A. S. R.

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I

"WHAT DO YOU DO AT CALVARY?"

SOMEWHERE along the line in a conversation with a visitor to Calvary House, comes the question: "You have such a large staff; what do you all *do?*" The one possible answer: "We talk and we listen," cannot be given; it would sound ridiculous. And yet it is true.

One generous but uncomprehending lady gives largely "to the work," but she has never really grasped what the work is, for she still asks that question.

Interested visitors who have been at a service or two ask to be given a job.

"We should like to *do* something," they say. There are, of course, church lunches and suppers where volunteers are needed, and there is sewing and knitting to be done, but when the inquirer finds that she is working at these things with other people like herself, and not with the staff, she asks the original question, with the rider that whatever it is the staff is doing, that is what *she* wants to do!

It was a little staggering to be told, as I was

told three years ago, that the main job at Calvary is winning people for Christ, and that in order to do this one must first be surrendered oneself. I had taken courses at the New York School of Social Work one summer in order to qualify for a social work job, but Calvary didn't offer any courses.

"But what am I to do?" I asked Mr. Shoemaker, the rector. He seemed to me a most impractical young man.

"Oh, come to Thursday night meetings and stay around." Then, as though it were a brand new idea that he had just invented: "Come and live with us, for three or four days."

"Come and see," was said nearly two thousand years ago.

There really is no other way. Watching the crowd in action is an informative and stimulating business. Any one may be a prospect. I have seen a boy tackle a bishop, a schoolgirl lay siege to her rector, and a woman of fifty one of eighty. Nobody is too young or too old or too uninteresting to be important, if he truly wants a religious experience which will go down into the roots of his life. A woman of sixty took French lessons all one winter in order to win a young Russian girl who gave them; and the girl was won.

There is no stagnant water at Calvary; everywhere there is a ripple or a current, as new life infuses and transforms the old. I know of no more

thrilling sight than that of a man or woman who speaks for the first time in a Thursday night meeting as a seeker, and then again later, after being changed. The first time he is apt to be vaguely sentimental about God; or actively sentimental about himself or somebody else. Sometimes he is approvingly condescending toward the group.

Then suddenly there will come a night when he will say something like this: "Since I was here last a lot has happened to me." Then in definite practical words he will tell exactly what Christ has done for him that week. Sometimes he has been delivered from drunkenness, from business dishonesty, from a sense of inferiority, or from jealousy; but always there is a glad recognition of a change. An old sin has gone, a new freedom and power has been found.

Then, presently, this "child of the second birth" will tell the group the story of some one that he has won for Christ; or perhaps this "grandchild" will be there to testify and give thanks himself. In the last few weeks before these words were written there has been a most interesting chain of events. A young clergyman from the Middle West was changed by Mr. Shoemaker. After each interview during the process he went back to the church where he was supplying during his vacation, and told the parish worker there what he was finding at Calvary. After he

was won, he brought her to a Thursday meeting, and an interview was arranged for her with a woman on the staff. She had gone through a period of great depression. Her work did not seem to be getting anywhere. She knew how to run organizations, but she didn't know how to reach the soul of a girl and turn her toward Christ. Her new-found friend talked very frankly. There was full and spontaneous " sharing," which means honest mutual exchange of experience and needs. The next week she radiantly introduced a girl that she had been working with, and a week later that girl surrendered and told us about it.

So, because one man was honest with another about sin and Christ the cure, three lives were changed. And this is only the beginning. The second link, the young clergyman, went home to his parish, and in a letter just received he tells of winning a boy, and of the fact that he was taking the lad to live with him for a few weeks so that he might be trained also to be a fisher of men.

That is what the staff " does " at Calvary. It is very expensive in time, for often there are many interviews before a person is won, and sometimes an interview lasts for several hours, but it is the most profitable and rewarding work in the world. Sometimes we work for weeks or months with one person and nothing happens, but that is all in the day's work.

Each member of the staff has, of course, some

part in the regular routine: showing Calvary House, housekeeping, working on card catalogues, answering a huge mail, writing material for the press, answering the telephone; but all of this is secondary to the main job. We use these jobs whenever we can as wedges into people's lives, openings to human friendliness, through which sometime divine love can flow.

"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world," said Christ, "that I should bear witness unto the truth." His commission has become ours. "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

"But this is a practical world," you reply. "Factories have to be managed, railroads have to be built and run. Schools must be taught and hospitals manned. Not everybody can work full time in churches."

I think it's a question of emphasis rather than of hours or place. No matter what the work is that must fill my days, if I am open to the voice of the Holy Spirit, work for Him will be shot through that "practical" work. Until industry and the arts and the professions are leavened by the desire of the men who control them, to make them serve God's will in the bringing of the Kingdom, there will be injustice and vice and poverty and disease. The whole world is to be won for Him, and everywhere we need men to carry that first job into the secondary ones.

The thing we do at Calvary may be done anywhere. The man in the corner store, the newsboy in front of it, the doctors, lawyers, merchants, thieves, whom they both serve, all have the same commission, whether they know it or not, to " bear witness unto the truth."

II

BUILDING A CHURCH STAFF

THE staff at Calvary Church at different times numbers anywhere from twelve to sixteen people. Some of them work at Calvary for a great many years, and some of them come on for a year or two, with the expectation, when they have received training, of going out to work in other parishes. The members of the staff are chosen on guidance.

I can remember my first staff meetings, in the library of the old rectory, which communicated directly with the church. A big, handsome boy used to slide through the room sometimes, and I discovered that he was staying with Mr. Shoemaker and doing an occasional odd job that was within his capacity. Mr. Shoemaker had known him at Princeton, and when a very severe nervous breakdown came the boy turned back to the man that he had admired and loved. It was one of those cases where, after the psychiatrist has done his best, the job is a still unfinished one, unless motive power can be found to help the patient carry out the physician's suggestions. One day, in staff, Mr. Shoemaker said triumphantly:

"John has made his decision, and my guidance is that he should come on the staff."

It seemed a funny business to me; a boy so far from well either physically or nervously, just beginning a new life, looked a problem for rather than an asset to Calvary Church. At first he was like a shadow. In order to be with him as much as possible, Mr. Shoemaker arranged to have him drive his car. Little by little he picked up certain routine duties. We all grew to love him, and he helped wherever he could. Finally there came a day when, after patient work with another boy, he helped him to a decision for Christ. From that time on his value to the church has increased steadily. He is going to a theological school next winter, and what he has found at Calvary he will carry with him to his ministry.

Membership on the staff is for the sake of the persons included; for their growth and development, as well as for the work they do for the church. During the winter that this is written there have been six members on a full-time volunteer basis. Calvary House provides them with pleasant rooms in which to live, but they pay their own share of the dining-room expenses, and in addition several of them who have private means contribute to the work for which they are responsible.

About two years ago a woman with a national reputation in the field of education was changed. She came regularly to church services and to group

meetings. About a year later two different members of the staff had guidance that she was to come to live at Calvary House and to work there. It seemed unreasonable, impossible guidance, from a human point of view. But just about the same time it came to her as well. She could have held her position in the public school system, where she was a superintendent, for many years more. But it seemed to be the thing for her to retire on a pension of half what her salary would have been if she had remained at her work, and devote her full time to volunteer work at Calvary. She has brought to the staff not only executive ability and wide knowledge, but also a sensitive and surrendered spirit.

It would have been impossible to have secured a woman of this kind on the church staff for the usual church job. We all know how difficult it is to get volunteers of outstanding ability and personality to give an appreciable amount of time regularly. If the only work to be given this woman had been ordinary parish work, she would have felt, and rightly, that she was more useful where she was, in charge of work for delinquent boys. But the thing that was offered to her was dealing with human lives one at a time; translating to them her own religious experience, in so compelling a way that they were eager for it themselves. She has undertaken the direction of the Church School, about which a story will be written after experi-

mental work there has proved itself. She also has the direction of Calvary House, and she is on call for interviews, like the rest of the staff.

Three of the most important people in the house are Bill, Frank and Fred—the cook, the houseman and the janitor, officially, but practically they are people who do as much as any of us to create at Calvary House the atmosphere that we want. All three of these men were rescued by Harry Hadley at Calvary Mission. If you'll drop into Calvary Mission some night you will quite likely hear one of them give thanks for two or three years, as the case may be, " free from sin and drink." It is a wonderful thing to have a household in which the people who do the housework are as able and ready to take an interview as the rector and his assistants. These men do not meet with Calvary staff, but there are frequent meetings of a larger group to which they come.

There is a girl on the staff who came down about three years ago to urge Mr. Shoemaker to organize in his parish a branch of the Young People's Service League. She was diocesan leader, and he very quickly realized that she was attempting to work with young people without having anything to offer them. She was not the sort of person that you ordinarily find on a church staff. She did not come to it as a refuge, but as an opportunity. She was on the staff for several months before her actual surrender came. Mr. Shoemaker's guidance had

been that if she were on the staff she would be changed and would be greatly used. This happened. With freedom and joy she works with people of all ages, and carries as her responsibility work in the Girls' Friendly, and a portion of the housekeeping.

If this job had had nothing to offer her but the Girls' Friendly and some housekeeping, she would hardly have given up life in a home where she had everything from her own motor to her own bathroom, and a large enough allowance to go to Europe when she chose, for full-time work on the staff. She came because she saw in this work the possibility of being used really to change the lives of other people. She had known, through both her job and her home life, many people without direction, as she herself had been without direction. But it was not until she came to Calvary that she found direction for herself and for other people.

The story of the coming of Harry Hadley as superintendent of the Rescue Mission and as a member of the staff of the church has the miraculous touch of guided happenings. He knew of the empty building where the Mission now is held on Twenty-third Street, and the desperate need of a mission in that neighbourhood. Mr. Shoemaker had felt that Calvary should have a rescue mission, but had waited until definite guidance came as to how it was to be started. He and Harry Hadley met by accident, it would have seemed, but

we believe by the direction of God. Their coming together had something inevitable about it. Very shortly afterwards the Mission was opened. Mr. Hadley brings to the staff ripe wisdom in dealing with people in desperate case, and a spiritual quality for which every one who has known him on the staff has had reason to be grateful.

Among others, we have on the staff this winter a Bryn Mawr graduate, and the daughter of a professor at Princeton.

There are always men eager to come as lay assistants after graduation from college and before entering theological school. They need clinical experience in personal work, such as is to be had at Calvary, just as a medical student needs hospital training before going into private practice. This, for example, was the case of a young converted Jew who worked for two years on the staff before entering a seminary. Sometimes the situation is reversed. Many men come on to the staff following their theological course and before they take parishes of their own. Still others, who have been exercising their ministry either as assistants in other parishes or in charge of their own parishes, join the staff to receive the kind of training offered them here.

Such a various crowd, with such changing personnel, might seem a difficult unit through which to do the work of a church. But for the four years that Mr. Shoemaker has been rector of Calvary he

has worked on guidance through such a staff, and by and large the routine work is accomplished, and often very well indeed. But the routine work is only the necessary background against which to carry out our first responsibility, that of touching people in spiritual need.

The staff meetings are opened by a period of quiet and prayer. Then guidance is shared. Somebody gets a topic for Mr. Shoemaker's next sermon; somebody gets guidance to share a new surrender in his life and the release and joy that have come with it; somebody gets the name of a parishioner who should be called on; somebody gets a guided thought about the Girls' Friendly or the Thursday Group. Almost always the name of the person to lead off the group that week comes. These staff meetings, which are held once or twice a week, keep us all in touch with each other, and in closer touch with the parish and its work than any formal committee that I have ever seen direct an organization. And our staff gets direction not only for the organization of the church but for people's lives as well.

III

BEHIND THE CHANCEL STEPS

THE work of most of our churches begins at the foot of the chancel steps. The rector on one side of them speaks officially to the lay folk in the pews stretched out before him. The curates in their places, the choir in their stalls, the organist at his keyboard, the choirmaster in his seat, seem like adjuncts to the service, a part of the background like the stained-glass windows in the walls. They are a more or less permanent part of the structure of the building, but although in reach of the rector's voice are beyond or shut off from his influence. There is nothing intentional in this. It is just that they are taken for granted, segregated in their jobs, not usually thought of as individuals as much in need of Christ as anybody in the congregation.

The rector of Calvary Church takes no one for granted. He knows that there is no one, no matter how happy and rich he may be, nor how poor and unsuccessful, who cannot find the experience that has given motive power to the rector's own life. Knowing what has happened to him in finding a personal religious experience, he knows the need of

other people for the same experience. At Calvary Church no one human life is valued above another. There is respect for spiritual quality, but none for wealth or social position. Leadership in Calvary is gained not because of assumptions that a man may make about himself, or some one else may make about him, but because he has found Christ and is learning how to share his discovery.

The first person to receive the message after Mr. Shoemaker came to Calvary, nearly four years ago, was the organist. This young fellow, musically successful, widely educated and with much practical experience, was helping to make a name for the music at Calvary and for himself. He was a person who had long lived his life with a consciousness of God, but he had never learned that God knew him so well that He could guide and direct his life not only in the big things but in the small ones. It was before Mr. Shoemaker had settled into the rectory that they had their first interview. This was in the old library, that has recently been torn down with the rest of the house to make room for a modern building. They sat in the heat of the summer, in the bare room, on a couple of old chairs which the former rector had not thought worth taking away. Atmosphere comes not only from surroundings, but from the spirit of the people who are together. Against this atmosphere the organist found Christ not only as a friend, but as an en-

thusiasm, something deep enough to supersede everything else in his life.

For two years more he gave his full time to music, then he was guided to make the music, in which he had a great future, second to an untried future as a minister of the Gospel. The next winter he was in a theological seminary, still playing at Calvary in order to earn his way, determined to use his music to the full, but to use it not for the sake of music, but for the sake of Christ.

The choirmaster in Calvary Church has done his work there for twenty years. The accuracy and beauty of tone of the Calvary choir are well known among musical people in the city. An added beauty will come into the music of this choir, Mr. Shoemaker believes, this season. At the first meeting in preparation for the season's work, the choirmaster, Mr. John Bland, in speaking to the choir, told them that the quality of their music would grow with their own spiritual experience; that he was as deeply interested in that as he was in their ability to read the notes he put before them.

In this choir are three people who already have been won at Calvary. The wife of the choirmaster is the soprano of the choir. Her lovely voice, which she has given freely, was not gift enough. Two years ago she surrendered the whole of her life to God, and her music is no longer her first interest. She is a delightful person socially, friendly and spirited. She is as gay and quick of

tongue as ever, but the major subject in which she is interested comes forever into the conversation. The musician has turned disciple.

Two of the choir men have been touched. One of them has sung in choirs all his life; has been passed by, by hundreds of sermons. The more personal quality of Mr. Shoemaker's preaching caught him, and one of the young curates, sensing his need, made friends with him. The relationship between the two men is an extraordinary one. Priest and choirmaster meet on the common level of the need for Christ's direction in their lives. On that basis they are friends in the deepest sense, each one contributing to the spiritual life of the other. Another choir man has had since his conversion quite an extraordinary influence over the boys with whom he comes in contact through the church. He offers them now something more than a good time while they are with him. He tramps with them, talks with them, plays with them; but these things are not, as they used to be, ends in themselves. They are a means towards establishing such relationships with the boys that they may be brought to his own experience.

It is the commonest thing in the world to take clergymen for granted. It is assumed that any one who has graduated from a theological seminary and is licensed to preach, and who has given his life to the ministry, knows all there is to be known about God; that he not only has this

knowledge, but that he knows how to put it to practical use. It is not always so. One of the curates at Calvary, a fine high-minded, devoted young fellow, had spent, before he came to Calvary, a winter doing the routine work of a parish elsewhere. His preaching was able, he was faithful to the organization work of the church, but he was not actually changing lives. Through Calvary he saw the opportunity for a life wholly dedicated to actual work for Christ, not work on committees nor through printed material nor just through sermons, but through the knowledge of individual lives and their problems, and the power of Christ to set them right. He is now a great force through personal work in the parish.

This is the story of a handful of people whom the congregation at Calvary looks at every Sunday. Miracles have happened steadily in the congregation itself. But that is another story.

IV

THE THURSDAY EVENING MEETING

CALVARY Church has always been a missionary church. We are poorer than we used to be, but we pay our apportionments, and we fill our missionary boxes. Historically, we rejoice that in 1874 the first general meeting of the Woman's Auxiliary was held here. But in 1925, when Mr. Shoemaker came from a missionary journey around the world to work out the missionary vision in a parish, a new emphasis was laid. He knew, from experience, that Christ's promise to Peter implied that any layman who follows Him, can be a fisher of men, and he saw that his first job lay, not with a congregation, but with individual men and women. He knew they could be taught, not only to angle for but to land "fish," for he had seen good fishing done by laymen, not only in China and India, but in England and America. He saw in a shabby old church, in the heart of a city, the opportunity to do a more specific job than draw a congregation to fill the nearly empty pews. He saw it as a place where rich men and poor men, business men, professional men, mothers of families, wage earners, and all the drift-

wood that floats past the business street where it is situated, drunks, thieves, prostitutes, liars, selfish people, wilful people, possessive people, could find a new way of life—a way nearly two thousand years old, but new to them.

But he saw more than that. He saw it as a place where all of these types, if won, could pass on the experience to others. He began on the nearest person. It was a hot June in an exhausted city, when he came to his cure, and the organist was close at hand, so for him he cast. He landed him, and soon afterwards a stenographer, a dissipated Jew, a preparatory school boy. With this little nucleus he began his training centre. The Thursday Night Group is known now in places all over the world, and in obscure corners of America.

The group itself meets now in the Hall of Calvary House, which has been made beautiful by hangings, tapestries, and religious paintings. Before Calvary House was built, if unbeautiful surroundings could have discouraged it, it would have faded away. At first we met in what was practically a hall passageway between the Parish House and the church. Outgrowing that, we moved into the rectory, where ventilation for so large a crowd was difficult, and where we were packed in so close that freedom of movement was impossible. When we grew too big for the rectory, we moved into the old gymnasium, where Mr. Shoemaker, sitting under a basketball net, had anywhere from

one hundred to one hundred and fifty people on camp chairs as close to him as they could get, for the men who built the gymnasium were not interested in acoustics. We have now grown to a winter attendance of nearly two hundred and fifty.

Mr. Shoemaker is apt to begin the meeting with a prayer for the presence of the Holy Spirit in the place; for guidance for whoever speaks. Then cheerfully, informally, he begins. One night it may be with an analysis of the interview between Christ and the Woman at the Well; how He drew her out, brought conviction of sin, and how she went out to tell a whole city full. Or it may be the story of some one who had surrendered the night before. Then, with his eyes twinkling, he asks:

"I wonder if Bill hasn't something for us to-night. It came during Quiet in staff meeting this morning that he would lead off."

"That's all right with me, Sam," calls a boy of twenty-five from the back of the room.

"Guess you better come up here," says S. M. S., Jr. "Crowd's too big to hear you to-night where you are."

Bill, as big and handsome and attractive a youngster as ever made a club and a team at Princeton, drops into a chair by the leader. "I've been having a great time," he says, and shows twice as many teeth as anybody ever had, as he says it. "When I remember the kind of a cuss I was four years ago, how I was so unhappy in col-

lege (although I seemed to have everything), that I got drunk just to escape myself—and think of now—! " Then he tells the story of a boy who " came through with him " the week before, the son of a missionary, by the way.

The meetings of this group are better drama than any that goes on on Broadway, but the group meeting is not held merely to interest people. The purpose is to give a chance to make real to outsiders a guided life, through stories of changed lives, and to take members of the fellowship further in their experience of Christ by witnessing as to what has happened up to date. Sometimes an old story is told, but usually the group is kept vital by the feel of a flow of life. No evening is successful if after it interviews are not held or arranged for.

The other night I saw here a bishop of our Church soon to return to China; a Mohammedan, Christian by decision, who is studying at a seminary; a secretary of a Y. W. C. A. from the Middle West; a wealthy business man from New Jersey; a charming girl with her husband from Tennessee (she had read Mr. Shoemaker's book, *Children of the Second Birth,* and coveted for herself and her family the confidence and joy of the people whose stories are recorded there); a curate from a neighbouring parish, discouraged because his own ministry was arid. Here he might find a new hope and the motive power to reach it.

The Thursday Group is not parochial. At least half of those who come represent other denominations than ours. Christ didn't live and die fussing over creeds and Church organization. He lived and died that men might know His Father. Somebody asked me the other day why our vestry stood for a Thursday Group and a clergy and staff as much concerned to bring an experience of Christ to a Presbyterian as to an Episcopalian! We work with human lives, not with creeds, and the freedom with which the clergy of other denominations come to examine our work shows that they have no fear that our aim is to build up Calvary Parish. Practically it does do that, for people who come to New York City from a distance join us—there is never a Sunday service that does not see visitors from other churches. But though we welcome them, we urge them to go back to work in their own parishes, and we help them by sending from the Thursday Group, people to testify in the groups which they start in their own parishes.

The rector has two assistants, and besides the regular services, meetings, sick calls and ordinary calling, they all spend a lot of time in interviews with individuals. It is no unusual thing to see lights in the rectory study in the middle of the night, and to glimpse through the windows Mr. Shoemaker talking to some man in spiritual need. But what could three men do in a city parish? They could only scratch the surface of the work

to be done, for many interviews last for hours. So they spend themselves not only in winning individuals, but in training as many of these as they can to do the job that they are doing. They challenge us to surrender our own wills, and then, through directed, guided living, to become fishers of men.

How can we be sure that guidance is from Him, and not born of our own wilful desire? First, it must be checked by four standards, those of absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love. For instance, a boy in a great medical school, faced at the time of his surrender by the possibility that God wanted him free of all local responsibility, came to some of us in the fellowship to "check" his guidance. His mother had died years before in South Africa without the perfect care that he craved for her, and there had then been born a dream of a great hospital in that, her native land, which he should found. Was there too much of personal ambition here? Was he ready to see this dream unrealized, or carried out by some one else? We sat together on a fallen tree overlooking a wide stretch of country at Minnewaska, New York, where we were both attending a series of meetings of a first century Christian fellowship, and "checked guidance." We had quiet together, and listened for what God had to say to us, and it came clearly to us, as it had to others, that God wanted him to work out the healing message of

Christ's power, through healing men's bodies as well as their spirits. All uncertainty gone, he went back joyful to finish his studies.

An older man, a graduate of a great university, was faced with the possibility of changing his life's work. He was the executive and personnel manager of a factory, a high-salaried official who had been able to use his position to give men changed at Calvary Mission a new chance at a job and self-respect. Ex-bums without references or creditable experiences found a chance through him. Some of us felt that here was a great opportunity to work out the message in business; that he was needed where he was, to show what Christ could do in industrial relations; but we had to be willing to help him find God's will. He has resigned his position, after witnessing to the head of his company and widely among the employees, and now, although no longer young, he has entered a theological seminary and expects to be some day working in the ministry.

A woman with a state-wide reputation in child welfare, in organized recreation and in politics, has slowly withdrawn from work of this kind, not because it is not good, and needed, but because for her the call is to deal with sin in individual human lives through sharing her experience of the cleansing power of Christ. She has to work for a better world through better human lives now, instead of through better institutions. She was an ambitious,

self-willed woman, and her present work can have none of the rewards of her old life—but after thirty-five years of compromise in order to get through organization what she wanted, she has found the greater reward of helping, without compromise, other women to find what she has found. She said in a meeting recently that she now knew the " answer " to life, and with it had come a satisfaction and joy that she had never known before.

I could go on endlessly telling stories that have been told to the Thursday Group: Of a newsboy who still runs his newsstand, but gives all his spare time to working with boys and men; of a bond salesman who uses investments in order to make as many contacts as possible with men who need the dynamic of a religious experience; but it isn't necessary.

The guidance of the Holy Spirit isn't on trial at Calvary. We have seen it work in too many lives to call it coincidence, or chance, or human decision. We know it for what it is—God's direct contact with human life. At Calvary we believe that the call is to lay people as well as to the clergy. We know that very ordinary men can get extraordinary results, and without theological training.

The Kingdom cannot come until you and I hear the call, each of us for our own lives, and we have to answer it by our own surrendered wills, before we can make others hear it.

V

THE CARPENTER'S SHOP

IT was a very hot night. There was still sun in the streets but the shadow of the elevated road lay heavy. There were very few people about—occasionally a group of exhausted looking men half lying on some steps and an occasional screaming child. The lighted cross in front of the Mission hardly showed against what remained of the daylight.

The Mission room came on you suddenly—a clean, bare, yellow place, hard benches, a platform one step up, the piano with a girl from another world softly playing hymns and, against the wall, a huge, black, wooden cross.

One by one men drifted in. There was no talk—some of them fingered hymnals. Once, when the girl at the piano played a refrain which they knew, the men half hummed, half sang it. Mr. Hadley, looking healthy, well scrubbed and with the very shiniest shoes, read a chapter in the Bible. I could not tell whether the men listened. He made comments afterwards, and I still could not tell whether they listened. They seemed sodden with exhaustion that was of heart, body

and spirit. Then they sang three or four hymns that I did not know. The men sang the sentimental ones with vigour—atrocious musically, they nevertheless caught you. Mr. Hadley told the story of his own life and conversion. The men listened.

Then a man from the benches got to his feet—generations of Anglo-Saxons back of his gaunt, hook-nose face—little smiling lines around the eyes—a fine face. "I want to give thanks for seven days without drinking." He sat down.

A huge, burly man—superb throat uncovered, very clean and upstanding (Swede or Norwegian, I think), gave thanks for three days without drink. Somebody whispered he was a trained nurse who had gone under.

A curious little man with a foreign face, unable to speak English, got up and babbled.

"That will do, John."

He seemed to understand Mr. Hadley's voice, and slumped back into his seat, looking quite happy, in spite of the dull, blunted look on his face.

They sang, rather low, a hymn which was called the hymn of invitation. A man in the room burst out crying and came forward to the front row and knelt with his back to the platform. Muffled by his arms, you heard through his sobs: "Oh, Lord! Oh, Lord!" He was quite drunk. For ninety days, somehow, he had kept straight, and the wife who had put him out of the house ninety days be-

fore for the sake of her children had promised to receive him back that night. He had been sleeping in a lodging house where every night drink had been offered him, and somehow he had managed to refuse until this night, when he was overwhelmed with happiness at the thought of going home. Happiness sapped his strength. Now the door of the place that he called home was shut against him by his own hand, but nothing that he could do could shut the door of the Mission against him.

Other men came forward, until there were perhaps a dozen kneeling there. Shining, clean Mr. Hadley put his arm around one and then the other, and helped them to say a few sentences to God. They were not like any other prayers. I doubt if the majority of the men had any familiarity with the forms of prayer:

"I thank God for bringing me here."

"Oh, Christ, help me!"

In Mr. Hadley who kneels by them each night, they know a man who has won the fight that they are fighting. As he tells them of his wasted youth, they, knowing his present life, see the everlasting miracle. Nothing remote or fantastic here. Just a man once broken, now whole. God's will for them is plain, for they do not befog the issue. "Sin" is for them a plain word for a plain fact. In politer circles a man who befuddles himself with drink, a cheat, a gossip, a thief, a liar, may try to dodge the issue of a new life. They call their acts by other

names than sin. They cheat themselves, but in doing so they miss out on the knowledge that God is here, accessible. The Mission men know themselves, and God.

We are accustomed through our philanthropies to give material things. Calvary Mission may give a man a meal, a coat, or a bed for a night, but they are given as symbols. They become almost sacramental, for they are offered as reflections of God's love, and so they are often received. Even if a man has sold for a drink the coat given him, when he finds the Mission door still open, he may for a moment understand the spirit in which the gift was made. "Do ye this in remembrance of Me." The Mission men look sin in the face, and bleakly, passionately, desperately, in the knowledge of their own lack of power, take the power of God's love.

There was a final prayer. The men who had not come forward drifted out. The men on the front bench waited for little talks with Mr. Hadley. The girl at the piano said, as we walked through Twenty-third Street, "It's hard to do right for twenty-four hours. Trying to do it forever is *hard.*"

VI

WITNESSING OUT OF DOORS

EACH Sunday night in summer the cross over the door of Calvary Church is lighted an hour before the evening service begins. Young men carrying signs that read, " The Church has come to you. Will you come to the Church? ", " Jesus Christ changes lives," stand in the doorway ready to fall in line when the clergy and a robed volunteer choir march out to Madison Square. A trumpeter, playing familiar hymns, and the clergy, reckless of their voices, lead the singing.

Friendly police hold up traffic on Twenty-third Street, holiday-makers returning home hang out of motors to see what it is all about. Everywhere, at the sight of the great wooden cross, men uncover. Working women, with little children clinging to their skirts, stand aside and let us pass. A drunk, swaying on unsteady legs, made the sign of the cross as he tried to keep up with the procession.

At Twenty-fourth Street, in an open place under the trees, a young Jew, converted three years ago, climbed up on to a glorified soap box and, flapping his arms, covered by the vestments of a lay reader, grinned at the crowd.

"Come up nearer, you fellows," he cried, "or you won't be able to hear us."

The shifting group closed in; about two hundred of them.

The service in the square is for the men on the benches and the passers-by, but on this special Sunday I saw standing in the crowd a Western bishop, the acting rector of a fashionable New York parish, several young bloods, and what a bum called "a couple o' gents in dog collars." There was also a woman of wealth who had come all the way from Tennessee. She had come to find out what kind of people we were, who so openly rejoiced in what God had done for us that we were willing to tell the world from a soap box. There were some pretty girls, with their "boys."

During the singing of "Jesus Calls Us," two men shared a leaflet on which the words of the hymn were printed. One was an old fellow with broken shoes and no hat, the other a bronzed young giant. They sang so lustily, with such abandon, that I wondered when last they had sung that tune, so evidently familiar to them.

The testimonies came from as widely, diversified a group as the listeners. A man who had spent twenty-seven years in prison told of how he had wandered into Calvary Mission, hoping for a warm place to rest. He found Christ there.

A Princeton man told of a sense of inferiority that had driven him to the verge of suicide, and

how " Sam," for so the Rev. S. M. Shoemaker, Jr., is called by members of the fellowship, had helped him to find both joy and direction for his life. A stenographer told how she had been a petty thief, undiscovered all the twenty-five years of her life, and how out of her small earnings she was making restitution. Only through confession and restitution had she been able to reach the saving power of Christ. Mr. Shoemaker was the last speaker. A reporter for the New York *Herald-Tribune* quotes him in the news columns on August 20.

" We fix flats," he said, " or rather Christ fixes them. If any of you are flat tires running on your own rims, come with us and Christ, and let us help you pray."

Then an old saint of God who years ago was Mr. Shoemaker's rector at home in Maryland, gave the benediction.

The crowd usually is very quiet, but this night a woman talked loudly, with great scorn, to a companion about " these religious speakers; they are all cuckoo." Finally a policeman turned to her and said: " Madame, if you want to listen, listen. But if you don't, move on; for other people do."

The light was beginning to fade as the clergy and choir formed again to march back to the evening service. That night, among others, about fifty men from the square fell in, and singing with us marched through the city streets, then up the steps and through the wide-open doors of Calvary. As

the volunteer choir fell in behind the regular choir, and filled the stalls in the chancel, the crowd slipped into the pews, among the members of the regular congregation. Nobody was too badly dressed or too unfamiliar with the service to feel at home. The pages where the psalms, prayers and creed are to be found are always given out, and the hymns are familiar ones.

At nine o'clock, on the church porch, the staff made friends with those who were strangers. An hour later I saw, sitting in widely separated pews, the rector talking to a boy, a lay member of the staff talking to an out-of-town clergyman, and a middle-aged woman in prayer with a girl on whose face the lines of defeat and despair were fading out.

There is nothing vague or theoretical preached at Calvary. Just the plain fact, that only in complete surrender to the will of God can the power of Christ to take away sin be found. This fact goes home to young and old, bum and fine lady alike. This is why Calvary goes out to those who do not come to her.

VII

THE TWENTY-FOUR-HOUR DAY

CALVARY Church is a cross section of New York. There are sitting in the pews each Sunday morning families who have lived in the neighbourhood for two generations or more, and visitors passing through the city. There are young and old, rich and poor. There are people who earn their living with their hands, and people who earn it with their heads. There are saints and bums; lady bums, as the small boy in *Punch* called them, and gentleman bums. There are people who know the Master and those who have never really even tried to know Him.

The staff is called to twenty-four hour duty. Our time never really belongs to us. We are here to learn for ourselves a quality of life, through willing submission to the guidance of God, and to help other people to find the same experience. This endless job allows for no ear cocked toward a time clock. There is no open season for self-will.

Not long ago there came a late afternoon when I was tired. In the evening there was to be a meeting for which I had some responsibility. I needed a quiet spirit, and I needed a cup of tea. I went to

a woman's club. It has a large membership of its own, and members of other like clubs, in other cities, are free to use it when they are in New York. It is so large that I rarely see any one that I know. I ordered tea, and rejoiced that I didn't have to talk to any one. For a delicious moment, I closed my eyes, but opened them suddenly when a pleasant Western voice asked:

"I want some tea, but I don't know how to order it here. Can you tell me?"

My tea had arrived, and my fatigue had departed. I asked the maid to bring a second cup and a second installment of toast, and then invited the inquiring stranger to join me. She accepted shamelessly!

"I hoped this would happen," she said. "I was so bored and lonely that I spoke to you in desperation." Then: "I lied; I knew perfectly how to send for the maid and get tea!"

If you are on the lookout, anything is an opening. I laughed.

"You ought to join my crowd. We believe in honestly confessing our sins!"

"Sins." She withdrew physically to the remotest corner of her chair, and spiritually a thousand miles away. I had been pretty abrupt, but she was jolted out of her boredom. I went on cheerfully:

"I saw you when you came into the room and was thankful that I did not know you. Sin one.

If we hadn't a police commissioner out to check the crime wave, I should have murdered you, for I wanted to be alone. Sin two. I did not want to talk, and I wanted my own way about it. Sin three. Three sins in five minutes is doing pretty well in the sinning business, even for me! "

She approached, physically, two inches and spiritually, a thousand miles.

" What is the sect? " she asked.

" The Protestant Episcopal Church," I countered. After a surprised stare, she giggled, so enchantingly that I loved her for butting in.

It developed rather quickly that she wasn't a temporarily lonely person, but a permanently lonely one. She was a round peg that had tried new square holes with amazing frequency. Three of the holes have been provided by jobs. Two, by homes which had come with ex-husbands, for she was a much divorced person. She had exhausted the resources of her native State and was out to see what New York had to offer. It offered me!

Talking about yourself for the sake of clattering your tongue is a dreary business, but she was unhappy, in spiritual need, and she was eager to know the cause of my happiness. I do not know any theology. Religious " hot air " bores me to death, but I knew a practical thing, for I knew the way out for her. I had found it for myself, and I had seen other people find it. A talk with a woman like this is more exciting than the best mystery

story ever written, because the story is true and, through sympathy and Christ's power to help through you, you are in the middle of the story yourself.

This is unfinished business for me. It was a casual touch, but when we parted, and I went to my meeting, she went to a shop to buy a New Testament. She wanted to find out for herself if there was confirmation in that book for what I had said. I may never see her again, but something happened in that club room that I don't believe she or I will ever be able to forget. I believe that some day the work begun with her will be finished; that she will find Christ and come through to a full surrender.

Not long after this I was lunching, one day, with a Jewish acquaintance. The party was purely social, and her daughter joined me when we were having coffee. She was a charming child of fifteen or sixteen, eager to do her part in making the occasion a success. She began very naturally, telling me about a dance that she had been to the night before.

" I like boys," she said, " but although it sounds funny, I have never seen the kind I like. The ones that come to the house to see my sister drink when they get a chance, and I don't like the way they behave with girls. I don't like the ones I know much better."

A little later she began, very shyly and wistfully,

to tell me of an imaginary playmate who had been her companion ever since she could remember. He stood to her for everything that she had failed to find in the world about her. It was an extraordinary word picture that she painted, of the way in which she had filled the gaps in that lonely inner life which so many young people led. She had never been in a synagogue, for her parents had departed from their ancient faith. She had never been in a church, for they had found no other faith.

I told her about the perfect Man, or rather not about Him, but about the things He did and said. She asked questions eagerly. Her last question brought a lump into my throat:

"Do you suppose, if I learned about Him, I'd have Him in place of the boy I pretend about?"

She goes to school in a distant city; I may never see her again, but I believe that she has been started on a quest.

Sometimes casual contacts like these that I have described go a great deal farther, but we cannot refuse to make any which are guided, even if nothing more happens than the giving of a challenge. I am not in sympathy with the attitude that we can be satisfied with "dropping a seed" here and there. Even in the slightest contact, when we talk on the major subject, we ought to be directed, and ready, to go all the way if we can.

Even calling at Calvary is not the routine, drab business that it is sometimes considered. The

clergy and staff treat it as a high adventure, for they go guided of God, both as to when and where they go, and they pray for guidance in what they say when they get there. It is too easy to fill our hands with seeds and wander about the world dropping them. Too few seeds of that sort reach flower and fruit, to make that a man-sized job to do for the Lord. Let us be thankful for every opportunity, no matter how slight, but let us also be keen to go farther, that we may help to bring to the point of surrender those who are in spiritual need.

VIII

"HOW DO YOU DO IT?"

HOW does a lay person do it? I am asked that question a dozen times a week.

How does a clergyman do it? I was asked that at a conference by four Episcopal clergymen, a Methodist parson, and a Presbyterian minister. All of these men had known a personal God for as long as they could remember, but each one of them had frankly said that while he had helped people, he had never brought one to an experience of Him. "Conversion" was a familiar word to them all; some of them believed or hoped that that experience often came automatically, with joining the Church, but each one said quite simply that he did not know how to help to reproduce, in others, his own experience. Two of them with equal frankness said that they had not had the experience, and doubted whether it was necessary to a man who loved God. Although I have only known God for three years, I have been trained in that time, at Calvary, to do the thing they said they could not do. About what I know from experience, I can be sure.

All my life the first lesson and the second lesson,

the Epistle and the Gospel, have flowed over me, but have never caught anywhere. The Old Testament affected me much as Frost or Masefield did. I ranked the Acts with poems of Browning. No one, of them all, affected my conduct. My creed read, "Be unselfish and keep a stiff upper lip." God did not come into it. Then, through knowing people whose lives had been changed and through knowing the stories of others farther afield, I made, with the help of a member of the fellowship, the decision that they had made—to surrender my will to God and to seek and obey His guidance. The Bible came alive, and the historical Christ, whom I had known in much the same fashion that I had known Abraham Lincoln or Saint Francis of Assisi, became the living Christ.

The emphasis of the group lies in sharing one's own experience. I hadn't any theology to share, but I knew what had happened to me. Any one could down me by quoting a verse from the Bible in argument, for I have a poor memory, but nobody could down me on what I had seen—drunks made sober, thieves made honest, lazy men made active for Him, wilful men seeking His will, not theirs. I squared my shoulders, a little rounded by over fifty years of living, quickened my step, and fell to.

The other day, with forty members of the fellowship, I was the guest of the wife of a distinguished lawyer at lunch. After food there was to be a meeting.

"I hope you won't think it rude if my husband does not join us," our hostess said to one of us. "He thinks the whole thing emotional and unreal."

By a happy chance they knew and liked some of my family. I learned that the host was a supporter of a politician with whom I had had an interview. That he was a pacifist; my mother was a Quaker. The problem was to establish confidence in me as an individual. It was necessary to show my host that an evangelical Christian wasn't a bore. My description of the politician as I knew him was sufficiently interesting so that our host, who "might" not lunch with us was on my right at table. We had a gay time, which took a deeper note as we spoke of the war and he learned that I believed in non-resistance. After lunch the spiritual eyebrows of the crowd went up, although the physical ones stayed down, when the host who had not been bored came to the meeting, and listened with real interest. I could have talked about religion for the first hour with him, but if I had, my fish would have gone down stream. The way is paved, with him and his wife, for a real interview with some one later as a result of the meeting.

I know one boy was caught because his companion was willing to mark time, talking about sport for an hour or two; another, by our enthusiasm for social casework. Every scrap of tact, humour, intelligence, knowledge, that we have, belongs to His work. Whatever we have and are was given to us

for this end only. Even our clothing matters, for it must not separate us from either rich or poor: it ought to be becoming and suitable enough to attract a millionaire, and simple enough so that a shop-girl feels at home as she looks at it. One of the most comfortable moments I have ever had was when a young working girl gave me the address of a shop where she had bought for $11.50 the charming gown she wore, because " their clothes look like you." So much for the first step in conversion, the establishing of friendly, warm confidence.

The second is usually to show the person you are with that you have something, a confidence, a joy, which they lack. That this comes when we honestly tackle our sins and ask God to scrap them for us. Here comes the necessity of sharing an experience. This requires guidance. A lot of things have happened to you; which ones of them will open the heart of your companion? I was talking to a church worker not long ago and I didn't seem to get anywhere. Then it came to me to share the story of an old sin, long hidden. She turned to me with tears in her eyes, and told me that she had grown so unhappy over the aridness of her work that for two years she had thought of suicide as the way out. " I couldn't have told you," she said, " if you hadn't talked about yourself as you did. I couldn't have told you if I hadn't realized that there ran an undercurrent of prayer through what you said."

Without sustaining prayer and the silent, almost unconscious cry for guidance that goes up during an interview, we cannot help any one toward conversion. I must be conscious of my own gratitude to God, and my humble, absolute dependence on Him, in working with another human being, or He cannot be made real to the other person.

After sharing experience which involves confession of sin, must come conviction of sin. No man can convict another of sin, that is the work of the Holy Spirit; but he can help him to see himself.

The next step is the apprehension of Christ, the cure, that in His love He will so guide us that the desire for that particular sin is taken away. But before a guided life is possible, there must come the absolute surrender of the will to the will of God. I have always been a strong-willed person, but when I was told that this was what I must do, I rebelled.

"My will is all I have," I said; "whatever I have gotten from life has come because I have known what I wanted and gone after it. I can't give it up."

A weak-willed person once said to me: "I have never had the sand to carry through anything. How can I carry through God's will?"

Fear of whatever may happen after surrender, in the next morning or the next year, is none of our business. If we let God guide us He will make His will ours, whether we are arrogant or weak. But the surrender, to be complete, must not only involve the whole, but such parts as we can see at the

time. A dishonest person must surrender specifically dishonesty, whether that involves property or attitudes. A person of unclean life must surrender not only unclean acts, but unclean thoughts—"whosoever committeth" "adultery in his heart," we are told, and the heart must be reckoned with, as well as the body. A successful priest of our Church told me of one long-established sin of his which he had occasionally conquered. He had to surrender that, but his great surrender lay in the surrender of his atheistic unbelief that God could give him complete victory. He had adored Christ always, since a boyhood experience before confirmation, but he had never known Him as the cure for sin. He had loved, but without faith.

Nothing that I have said implies that when we let God take us in hand, our responsibility ceases. As we try to live the guided life, new surrenders of specific sins come. But the fact of the first decision remains, and it is against the background of that, that we are able to keep our further path clear.

It requires no special attainments to help other people to surrender—to conversion, as that moment is usually called. You can do it, every one of you who read these words, cleric or layman that you may be, but before you can help others to this point, you must have lived through it yourself.

"Thanks be to God, that giveth us the victory," is not only poetry, but experience.

IX

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH THE SAINTS?

AS chairman of the Committee on Information of Calvary Church and a member of the staff, it is a part of my job to show Calvary House and to answer questions. This place, where most of us live and all of us work, is interesting to outsiders not only because its rooms are beautiful, but because of the purpose for which it was built. It was built that the staff might live in close fellowship and, through such living, create an atmosphere in which people coming to us for help might see some reflection of the things about which we talk.

All kinds of people come. The only kind not represented yet which the old rhyme mentions are Indian chiefs. If one of them has been around, it hasn't leaked out. Lately there has been a run of church saints, not listed as such, for they fall into every group. We all know them, lovable, unselfish, hard working, but unable to translate what they live by, into terms comprehensible to other people. I have stated a real problem to a church saint and been answered by a text. The text was a wonderful one, but I didn't know what to do

about it. A boy speaking of such an one said, in despair, the other day: "She's a beautiful character, but what good does that do me?" It didn't do him any good, it only made goodness seem more inaccessible than usual.

Early one morning the rector called me on the house telephone:

"There's a fellow here that I wish you could talk to. He wants to know how to win people, and I'm swamped to-day."

He proved to be an attractive young man, a student chaplain in one of the great universities. At the Episcopal General Convention he had heard that at Calvary we believe that the chief job for all of us is bringing individuals to definite decisions for Christ. He wanted to know how we went about it. He was intelligent, humble, and full of eagerness to serve his Master. He began by telling me that he was deeply concerned with the problems of half a dozen young men, but that facing these problems he could find no solution.

"What would you advise a man who—" and he outlined the story of John as he knew it. I had no rule-of-thumb by which I could measure off a specific solution for a specific problem, and hand it to him, but in order to get at the man's own problem it was necessary first to let him empty his mind of the immediate thing that troubled him. His attention was on somebody else's life; mine was on his.

In order to give, we must first ourselves possess.

What had he to give John? That had to be determined. Had he had, himself, an experience of Christ? Had he surrendered his will and his life to the will of God? Did he know how to find out that will, if he had determined to follow it? We had just met; even so gentle a person would have resented such questions. Yet time was short—he was going home in a few days.

"Have you shared your own experience with John?" I asked.

"Oh, yes," and with a radiant look in his eyes he said: "I have told him about Christ," then, the look dulling, "but he didn't seem to get anything out of it."

This generation are quickly bored with what is theoretical; but they are keen about what happens. It would have been theoretical to tell him this! So, without apology, or preface, I shared a problem of my own youth. He forgot the boy that he had been talking about, and said eagerly:

"That is a struggle with me, but I never thought of it as a sin. You did call it a sin?" I had.

We talked the morning through. Things that had been locked up for years in the back of his mind came out into the light, nothing very black or dreadful, but excess luggage, all of it: things which he had always refused to think about frankly, but which when faced got out of his way. "Confession" is an old word for this kind of talk, and I like better the word "sharing." Whatever the

name, the form of experience is the same. It developed that when he was eleven years old he had had a religious awakening, the comfort of which had never left him. He talked about being guided, and in the same breath said that he wanted only to do the unselfish thing, "but when you do, sometimes the situation is balled up worse than ever." I remembered that "there is a way which *seemeth* right unto a man . . ."

When he had finished college he started in business, only to give it up because the pull of a life devoted to religious work was too strong. He had no regrets for the decision, but the work that he was doing, while it was religious in name, was in fact little more than friendly service. Guidance came to me clearly that because he had never thought through his experience of God, he could not use it in the lives of other people. It was my job to help him to do this. For the sake of other people we had to discover what had happened to him. He enthusiastically agreed to this. We went over his life year by year. We came finally to the issue of marriage, and he exclaimed joyfully:

"Now I know; I never realized it, but I surrendered to God one morning when I was tying my necktie in front of a mirror! I was getting sick and tired of thinking about girls. I couldn't get them out of my thoughts. I couldn't have a friendship with a girl because I looked each one over to see if she was a possible wife." He grinned

engagingly. "You don't know how distracting it is to have so many possible wives!" This form of day-dreaming had hindered his work, it had spoiled his relationship with girls, and it had dulled the edge of his interest in action. He went on:

"As I looked at myself that morning, I knew I wanted to be done with that kind of thing, and I gave to God the direction of my thoughts, and with them I gave Him my whole self to use." The backbone of the habit was broken that day, he told me.

"I am surrendered," he said triumphantly, but then came again the clouded look. Why wasn't he winning people, he asked, or even definitely helping them? I told him that what he had shared with me was a common problem of all young things, and that his experience of the surrender of his whole life was the solution for that and every other problem; that, instead of worrying because John occasionally got drunk, he needed, after John had faced such specific sins as they could together dig up, to reproduce in John his own experience of surrender. This man loved Christ and had surrendered to Him, but he had never faced his experience. Even now, when he had done this, he still hadn't the slightest idea what to do with it. He did not know how to share it.

Somewhere along the line I had said that he must get guidance on exactly what to say to John; this he now picked up with enthusiasm, for it was

going to be fun to disagree with me after so much agreement.

" I don't see how a man can be guided all the time, even in his words," he said.

" What's the good of being surrendered to God's will, if you haven't any way of finding out what His will is? " I asked.

He saw it like a shot, and that was the end of the interview with me. Later he talked to other members of the staff, including Mr. Shoemaker, and the night he started home he told me that he was keeping Quiet Time, that guidance was beginning to come. Before he left, in a Thursday Night Group he gave his testimony, pointed now into a wedge that will reach those inner places of men's lives where they really live. His students will listen to him now, when he talks religion, for a God who can clean up your problems for you is an interesting God to hear about.

My next saint came along in a few days. She was a woman of sixty, I should judge, who had loved God and sought and followed His guidance in all the major affairs of life. It had been a life of sorrow and sacrifice. Death had come ten years before to her beloved husband. There had been another long illness in the family and, finally, the nursing for years of her mother, who lived to a great age. Now suddenly, for the first time since she was grown up, her time was her own.

" I have come," she said, " because I was told

that at Calvary I might find out what to do with the rest of my life." I suggested that she come to the Women's Group, and she said:

"I am going away next week, and for this week my hostess has filled my time." It seemed like my last chance with her. Guidance came clearly to tell her my story. She listened with absorbed interest to how another woman with fifty years of life behind her had found a whole new life through guidance. She sat very still—a pregnant silence. "I have never thought of seeking guidance in small things. Perhaps He means me to give up my visits, and come to live near Calvary, so that I can learn to do for other people what you are doing for me."

The next day came this letter: "My hope and faith have always been in my Lord and Saviour. Yet I fear I have not been a profitable servant, and all that you have said will help me to find out why. If there be some further surrender to make, I believe He can show me. I do want to find some way to help His Kingdom, and it seems to me your group has found a way. I shall come to you again, if I may, and try to learn."

The saint who stands out most clearly in my mind is a very great gentleman indeed. He has done distinguished field work in his communion, and is beloved wherever he goes. I shall never forget his standing up in a Calvary group meeting at the General Convention in Washington, and paying his debt to the crowd that had helped him.

He told of how he had been touched by the directness and the contagious honesty of a party of young people with whom he had spent a week during a religious house party. He had never seen anything like the kind of fellowship which they had with each other, and which they shared with him. Neither his age nor his eminence could shut him out. He was at home with them, a familiar. One night, after a Quiet Time when guidance had been shared, he went to his room and thought the thing out. All his life he had depended on guidance. All he was and had, he had given long ago to God. He had tried always, faithfully and lovingly, to serve Him. What did that crowd of young people have that he lacked? He knew there was something.

He turned to prayer. "It came to me quite clearly," he said, "that there was a habit, not wrong in itself but wrong for me, because no matter how I tried I couldn't get rid of it, where I was defeated; here was a place where God did not have control. On my knees I confessed to God my lack of faith and asked Him to take that habit out of my life. That was the end of it," he said.

Here was a man outstanding in the church, of saintly life, who happily, gratefully thanked God for the group which had shown him that He is as interested to help us in our smallest weakness as in our greatest needs. He had a clearer vision than ever he had before of a God-directed life.

I used to think of people like these as finished products, but as I look about me at the people that I have known only in the three years since my own conversion, it's amazing how they have changed and grown in that short time. The finest of them realize that they are only a very short way on the upgrade toward God, and, like the three people I have described, they face the sin of whatever hinders them on the climb, get rid of it and, that much less handicapped, go on His way. And this happens at seventy as well as at twenty-seven—or any other age.

X

"CHECKING" AND "LETTING DOWN"

A CLERGYMAN nearing middle age said, at a Thursday night meeting not long ago, that he was impressed by two things: The spiritual maturity of the young people who spoke, and the attitude of the whole crowd in seeking perfection of life.

These two things come from a common cause. At Calvary we are not satisfied with ourselves, and we don't intend to leave other people in that unenviable position. The first great definite surrender of our wills to the will of God is the starting point; beyond that lie a thousand different and separate surrenders, and through these come maturity and growth. We often do not know what is the sin that is hindering us, and there the loving help of other people comes in.

We are told that Mary "kept all these things in her heart." Christ had pointed out to her at the temple in Jerusalem His obligation to do His Father's business. I suppose that she did not understand very well His rebuke, but there was no rebellion in her. Now, in the group with which I am working we call this process one of "checking,"

raising a question mark when we feel one of us has been unguided. Mary may have wanted Christ with her; His place was somewhere else.

I know of no time when surrender is more difficult for me than those moments when I must check some one else, or they must check me. But those are the moments of growth.

In a group of women which I was leading a short time ago, we were thinking and talking about surrender, and I asked that we each one in turn go back to the time we had made our first complete surrender, and share how it happened. In the group was Polly, a very attractive young woman. She spoke easily and well at first, of the surrendered life; then, more haltingly, she tried to tell us what had happened to her. It was clear to me that nothing had happened; that the group had taken her for granted and in turn she had so taken herself.

She finally said, rather doubtfully: "I suppose I have surrendered," and I replied that supposition wasn't possible. All that was involved was a question of fact—she either had or she hadn't. Difficult tears came to her eyes. Immediately two older women rushed in where no angel would have trod.

"My dear," said one, "you are a lovely person; of course you have surrendered." Another said:

"Don't worry about it. It will be all right."

This is what we call "letting down."

She was a lovely person, and worrying wouldn't

do any good; so much was true, the rest was untrue. After the meeting was over Polly and I arranged an interview for the next day, and it was then that she gave her life and her will to God.

It was pleasant to say to her what the two older women said. It is always pleasant to say the comforting thing, but they didn't help her. By saying this and nothing else, they had "let her down." But my job wasn't finished—after the meeting I talked to these two women—"checked" them, for I told them what they had tried to do to Polly. She needed to go further, they had tried to content her with the place where she stood. If there had been in me any self-seeking, any sense of superiority, any critical spirit, anything but the longing to be used of Christ, nothing would have been accomplished. Before I could go to either of them I had to be sure that in me was no self-will, no desire to do a job myself. A time like that is a time for prayer.

I am often rebellious. Not long ago a member of the fellowship came to me, and "checked" me by saying that he felt I was parochial-minded; that my concern was for Calvary Church rather than for the whole world. I denied it, with heat.

"In separating the sheep from the goats," I said, "I don't put Episcopalians in one place and members of all other denominations in another!"

I elaborately explained that I had interviews

with Presbyterians and Methodists! That I went to non-sectarian religious conferences; that Calvary was a piece of the world! That I was on the staff at Calvary, so I had to work there! That somebody had to work in local situations. On and on, indefinitely, I went. He said nothing, and I felt triumphant. Who was parochial-minded? Not I!

But I couldn't forget. He was a man who had gone much further spiritually than I. Presently, instead of trying to defend myself against his "check," I began wondering why he had given it. What was there in me that had made him give it? And why hadn't he argued back? Times like that are hard going. It came to me that I was more interested in working through Calvary Church than in anything else. Suppose that God wanted me to work elsewhere? Was I ready? I wasn't. I had to surrender my love of work in that local situation, and be ready from the bottom of my heart to work anywhere for Him, before release came. It seems to be His will for me to work at Calvary. I am thankful, but if a call comes to work elsewhere, I am ready. And I am only ready because a member of the group was willing to face my rebellious unsurrender, and to tell me the truth.

A young girl, very modern, very gay and pretty, asked an older woman if she might see her alone for a few minutes. The older woman, much flattered, kept the appointment. The girl, uncomfortable, on the defensive, blurted out:

"I thought that I ought to tell you that you annoy me excessively."

Now, this is not quite the thing that young girls ordinarily say to their elders! There was nothing for it; the older woman laughed at her own discomfiture.

"I am sorry, Susan," she said. "What are we going to do about it?"

The laughter was so sincere that the girl laughed with her, and then they talked. The last thing that the older woman wanted was to annoy any one. It came out that she had ignored the girl on various occasions, in the stupid way that many of us do when we don't want to be in the way of the young. So much for her part, which she frankly acknowledged. The girl quickly came back with where she was at fault. She was accustomed to being made much of at home and among her girl friends. She was suffering from hurt pride. They grew to like each other, in that interview.

On any other basis, what most of us are taught to consider courteous reticence would have kept the girl silent. In the fellowship of Calvary, real and happy relations are possible between all kinds of people and between young and old, because we are frank with each other. The girl had not diagnosed the reason for her feeling, and in doing so with her new friend they found that they were both at fault. This kind of honest speech, or what we call "checking," is one of the priceless rewards

of really being willing to be free of any sin as soon as it is discovered; in this case, age-self-consciousness on the one side, pride on the other. Under different circumstances they would have gone on being uncomfortable when they were together. They should never have known each other. As it was, they both went a step forward that day.

The first reaction of the reader may be that the girl was rude. We have to take the younger generation where we find them, or we will never get anywhere with them. If we do that, we shortly find ourselves with them in very good places indeed. Standing on our dignity doesn't get us of the older generation very far, and if we really have dignity, we needn't worry about it. It will defend itself.

The Rev. F. N. D. Buchman defines sin as anything that gets between us and another person, or between us and God. The feelings that that girl and I had for each other were sin, for annoyance and self-consciousness separated us from each other, and that involves the brotherhood of man.

A young married woman in the group appeared one day in a becoming but very striking hat. She is a beautiful creature; she knows it, and plays up to it. One of the men "checked" her when he asked her if she was willing to surrender her conspicuous clothes.

"There are people I couldn't send you to, to help, in that hat," he told her. She came to me, and I "let her down."

"It's a fascinating hat," I said, "and I'd give anything to be able to wear it." She wasn't satisfied.

"Why did he say that?" she asked. Then, presently:

"I do think too much of my appearance."

A silence. "I love to have people notice me." Silence. "I hate it if they don't." Finally: "Oh, darn! I'll never wear that hat again!"

She is as beautiful as ever and quite as well dressed, even if she doesn't hit you in the eye when she first appears. Thanks to that "check," she has put her clothes where they belong, into the back of her attention, instead of into the front of it. Now she can be sent anywhere, to rich and poor, liberal and conservative, for she creates her own impression instead of letting a hat or a gown do it for her.

This may seem small talk, but such seemingly small things get between us and people, and so between us and God. We have to uproot small sins as well as great.

At first I could not see the value of checking. I thought it officious and self-satisfied. Where it is officious and self-satisfied it is not of God. Where it is done in love, and only that we may leave behind us something that hinders us, then it is of God, and I must ponder it in my heart.

XI

"IT'S ME, O LORD!"

"'Taint the deacon, 'taint the preacher,
But it's me, O Lord—
Standin' in the need of prayer."

THE problem of trouble for which we seem to have been in no way responsible forms an experience that comes, I suppose, to every one of us. Why is my child delicate? Why is my wife dying of cancer? Why can't my husband get a job that'll support us? Why has my wife fallen in love with another man?

I used to meet problems like this by trying to "buck up" the person who brought them, and then by suggesting such measures as experience, very largely acquired through social casework, suggested. Sometimes it is possible to help in a situation in this way. But by and large the method is like applying a hot water bottle to an injury which requires surgery.

We all talk a great deal about the casual attitude of this generation toward divorce. But most of us have nothing to say to two people who see their life going on the rocks, that will really make any difference. I met this problem a few months ago.

She stood waiting for me after a meeting. She was a trig, alert, rather noticeable little person, with lively eyes but an immobile face.

"I wanted to get Mr. Shoemaker's advice about something, but he says I had better talk to a woman. I'd like to talk to you."

We found a quiet place, and the story, evidently long pent up, came out in a flood of words. She was neither nervous nor excited, but she had reached a place where somebody had to know what was going on inside of her. She made it quite plain from the beginning that she was telling me this story at length because it would not be possible to advise her unless I knew it.

Her marriage had been a war marriage. Her husband was a straight, attractive young fellow of about her own age. She hardly got to know him before he was off for France. She had studied stenography, and soon after he left she took a job. In very short order she was raised to the position of a private secretary. She liked her work, and was glad to help out her husband's mother with her expenses. Finally, in order to save expense, the two women lived together. The husband sent home his pay, and they waited happily for his return.

He came back, as so many men did, a very different person from the boy who had left. He was unstable, easily bored, and seemed incapable of application. He got job after job, but could not

hold them. The intervals between jobs became longer and longer, and Katherine, his wife, faced with the need of a roof and food for three people, went back to the job that she had given up when he came home. She had always held on to her church. She said, quite frankly, that she liked working on the committees, and that she had made some pleasant friends among the women. But even though she was tired at night from the long day's work, she held on, not because of the social life, but because, as her home situation became more and more difficult, she hoped that somehow, through the Church, she might find an answer to her bewilderment.

Finally, it became common gossip in the small city where she lived that her husband was spending his unoccupied days with another woman. In the end, he asked her for a divorce. What did I think she ought to do? She had never believed in divorce, she said, and she couldn't give up hoping that her husband would get tired of this other woman and come back to her. Even if he did, life seemed to her pretty uncertain. As his wife, it was possible that there was no more happiness for her. And yet all her training and all his mother's influence were against the divorce.

I told her that it was impossible for me to hand her a decision. That any decision that was worth while must be reached by herself, and with the help of God.

"That's all right," she said, "but what am I to do? I can't expect God to tell me."

I said that that was exactly what He would do. But that she could probably only find out His will if she were already pledged to accept it, whatever it was.

"Well," she said, "I don't know about that."

I turned the tables upon her.

"I have been intensely interested in hearing your story and getting to know you," I said, "but there's one fact that we have both got to face. That what has really happened here has been that you have spent an hour confessing your husband's sins. I know that he supports neither you, his mother, nor himself. I know that he has lost job after job through his own fault. I know that he has been unfaithful to you, and wants you to divorce him so that he may marry another woman. None of these facts helps me to know how to help you."

I was guided to share with her then an old rebellion of mine.

"Well," said Katherine, "that's exactly the way I feel. I have always done my best, and I have always worked hard, and I have been square. There were lots of chances, when Ted was abroad, to fool around with other men. But I didn't take any of them. And now here I am, supporting his mother, as well as myself, dead tired at night, and nothing but a roof over my head and the tiredness

to show for my work. I guess you know pretty well how I feel."

Sharing one's own experience is the surest way to really get at the heart of some one else. As I talked of my own rebellion she suddenly said:

" I suppose it doesn't do me any good to be mad about life. But what do you do? "

I told her that the only possible happiness lay in finding out God's will for each situation. Then, when she knew His will, and was ready to fulfill it, then there could be no rebellion. That rebellion, conflict inside of ourselves, was devastating.

" Yes," she said, " and of course I realize I am pretty sorry for myself. When I haven't anything else to do, I think what a tough time I have."

" Yes," I said, " you were doing that just a minute ago." And we both laughed very cheerfully together.

Finally, she said: " You mean, the first thing to happen is that I should be different. That it's none of my business, just now, what kind of a person my husband is. That what I've got to attend to is the kind of a person I am myself."

I told her that was so. She had a great deal of character, so that the surrender of her will to the will of God was not as hard as it is for many people. She did this with the same intelligent, fearless attitude with which she had tackled her life all along.

I heard from her a few weeks later. It was an

extraordinary letter. She wrote that she had received her first guidance; that it was: "See to your own life first." She said that the surrender of rebellion and self-pity had left her happier and more free than she had been for many years. That she had shared what had happened to her with her mother-in-law, who was deeply touched. That she was striving now to think of some way in which her husband could meet Mr. Shoemaker. They live many hundred miles away from New York, and there is little money. Somehow she hoped that her prayers would open a way, that her husband would be willing to come, and that he would be changed.

"Not," she wrote, "because I hope that he will come back to me. I don't seem to hope about that any more. But because I want him to share the joy that I have found in my own life."

A couple of years ago, if a girl like this had come to me for help, I should have gotten very indignant indeed over the way in which her husband had treated her. I should have encouraged her in her self-pity, because it would have seemed to me tough luck that she should have to support her mother-in-law as well as herself, and she would have left me with nothing more than the feeling that somebody was interested in her. I should have probably given her a definite decision as to whether or not I thought she ought to secure the divorce. But now I know a better way. And this

better way has produced for her what no lesser one could have done—confidence and joy.

This situation had gone so far that retrieving it is a very difficult matter. We need to confront our young people, before shipwreck comes, with a vision of what a marriage that is guided by God can be like.

At one of the religious group meetings of the First-Century Fellowship, which we call "house parties," I was very much attracted to a young married woman, who was the very last word. She was not only the last word in clothes and speech, but the last word in lips and eyebrows. If you followed any trail of men, she was apt to be at the end of it. She had been playing round with the group for some time, and the younger members had been talking to her and trying to help her to find an experience of God. She was ground that had been thoroughly worked over, and was therefore a most difficult person to help.

I never get over my sense of interest and surprise that, while the Lord uses every scrap of wisdom, intelligence and knowledge that we possess, He gives us that *N*th thing—the thing you can't put your finger on, but which you have to have in order to do His will. That is the direction that comes from the Holy Spirit. I knew nothing about Nancy, excepting that she was fascinating, that she was unhappy, and that a lot of people had talked to her. But I was guided to share with her that I

myself had always been a restless person, never satisfied with what I had done; always trying to look around the corner. Nancy said: " It's funny you should have said that, because it's exactly like me; I'm restless like that." Then she told me that she was married, that she loved her husband, but that she couldn't seem to live without excitement, and that the excitement that she took lay in attracting men. " The funny thing about it," she said, " is that I am not particularly interested in the men who like me. They are too easy! But if a man is indifferent to me, or doesn't like me, then it's wonderful to go for him."

She had a very real dignity and a self-respect which had made her repudiate actual love-making. But the thing that amused her was to bring to the very brink, the men she met, and then go gayly on her way, to try for another difficult prospect. Any kind of happy home life seemed impossible. She was whistling to keep up her courage as she faced the probability of a divorce.

As she talked, she began to see her own life against the background of the people round her. I told her stories of people as restless as she, who had found that restlessness could be resolved into a better, more satisfying kind of adventure than she knew—the adventure of doing one's share to bring the Kingdom on this earth. I was guided to tell her about the relationships between men and women in this group, how happy and honest and

companionable they were. And I said: "When a man and a woman make friends on this basis, it is a permanent relationship. How many men friends have you, Nancy?" She looked at me very seriously. "Hardly any," she said. "Because, of course, when you feel about men as I do, there always comes the point when you have to get rid of them."

There was nothing stupid about Nancy. She got the picture of totally new kinds of human relationships quickly, and she liked it. Conviction of sin is apt to come when we really see ourselves. She didn't like the girl that she herself had shown me.

"But I don't want to surrender," she said, "I don't want to give up my will. I might be willing to try to live differently. But I don't want to *promise* to do it. I don't want to promise it to you, and I don't want to promise it to God."

Often, in an interview like this, there comes a time when only prayer will turn the tide. I should naturally have had prayer then with her. But I was guided that this was not the thing to do. And I said:

"Nancy, I don't think prayer will help you now. The Lord has done all that he can for you. It is just a question of what you will choose to do yourself."

"Oh," she said, "I am so glad! People have prayed with me off and on all morning!" I went on:

" The time has come where you must either take it or leave it. You are in a dirty, messy boat, with a smashed rudder, going nowhere. Beside your boat is a clean boat, headed up into the wind, that is going somewhere. You pay your money and take your choice! What is it? " We sat in silence, for what seemed like a very long time. Then Nancy looked up and, like a boy, stuck out her hand. " Me for the *clean* boat! " she said.

This may seem to a conventional generation a pretty casual way to come into the experience of conversion. But it's a hopeless business, not to take young people where they actually are living. I don't believe that Nancy could have been won by a more formal, more piously religious method. I know that what had to happen to Nancy is what has to happen to all of us. She had first to be honest with herself. To share what she found out was wrong in her own life with some one; this is what the Church has always known as confession. And then, with the help of the Lord Jesus Christ, give up her wilful ways by surrendering her will to the will of God.

This all happened only about six months ago. But Nancy is going strong. Her relationship with her husband has deepened and steadied, and she herself is working with joy and enthusiasm to help other young women find what she has found.

The story of Nancy's conversion may seem to you almost irreligious. There was about it none of

the solemnity that we might well expect at such a time. But Nancy is a member of a new generation with new attitudes and new reactions. I had to meet her on the ground on which she stood, in order to even catch her attention. She is a very real person, and the real things, that have always mattered to every generation, matter to her. Yet her approach is different. She went into the experience through a door that might not open to many of us. But she came out the door through which we must all pass—the door of absolute surrender to the will of God.

I have told this story because I believe that in work with girls like Nancy lies the answer to unhappy marriages and to the divorce problem. Girls like Nancy may love their husbands, as she did, but the irresponsible attitude toward marriage is one of the elements which have made for wrecked homes.

It isn't enough to tell girls like Nancy that they must adapt themselves to their husbands, or that they must not do this and they must do that—the thing that will hold them, is to show them our highest allegiance. When that is at work in their lives, they will know how to deal with the human situations in which they find themselves.

I suppose we all have known people who cherished a sorrow. Often they have been people of great sweetness whose lives were centred in the Church. But they have somehow gotten bogged in

self-pity and the issue of the surrender of their sorrow has never been raised for them.

A woman was brought to us over a year ago by a social worker. She was dressed in the heaviest kind of mourning, and her face showed hopeless sorrow. I was guided to sit next to her in an informal group, and the usual rather slow process of making friends, and establishing a relationship, did not seem to be necessary. All the ordinary conventions and inhibitions had been swept away from her by her sorrow. You felt that for her there was nothing in life but endurance. We arranged an interview, and when we came together she said that she did not know why she had come. That she could think of nothing but herself, and that it was impossible for her to talk without such floods of tears that intelligible speech was not possible. I shared a little of an old sorrow of mine and, as I did this, I wondered why the Lord should have guided me to her, for I had never known such grief as she was suffering. But it proved that that scrap of my experience was to unveil her reserve.

She had been very happily married. Her husband, her children and her home had pretty much filled her life. I imagine that life had given her all that she wanted. Then, one day, her husband was hurt in an accident. He was able to go on with his business, but she began to feel in him a sensitiveness which was new. He was afraid, she thought, that she was repelled by his injury. This was a

million miles from the truth, for his handicap aroused in her a passion of protective love such as she had never known before.

Then, one day, he did not come back at the usual time. For six weeks, until word came that he had been drowned, she did not know where he was. When she did know what had happened, the sorrow of having lost him was sharpened into a cutting pain. She was afraid that he might have committed suicide thinking that perhaps his injury had made her love him less. This was the self-torture that she had faced for weeks. Her children and her physician had become very anxious about her, and they had proposed to this social worker that she be made interested in people less fortunate than herself. She was given a family or two to work with. She tried to do what was expected of her, but she did it in a detached, automatic way. It really meant nothing to her. Nothing meant anything to her but her own despair and remorse.

Presently, feeling my sympathy and regard for her, she began telling me little things about her home life. How she had been putting into order her husband's belongings when her hands had hit against some fishing tackle. He had always, when he could get the opportunity, enjoyed fishing more than any other sport. She said to me:

"It went through my mind, then, that he went fishing. But of course I knew that could not have been so. I was only trying to comfort myself so

that I should think that he had died by an accident."

Those of you who have had an experience of guidance know that it comes in different ways. Sometimes it comes with a clarity and authority which cannot be denied. Through my mind went the words:

" He went fishing."

It was no vagrant thought, no repetition of what she had said. I felt that it was a repetition *to me* of guidance which God had tried to give *to her*. As I pondered these words in my heart, I knew there was no human proof, but I knew God's love for His children. I told her the words that had come, and that I believed they were from God. I shall never forget her face.

" Do you mean," she said, " that the Lord, Jesus Christ, loves *me* enough to care whether I suffer needlessly or not? " Her reaction was not thankfulness that we had had assurance that her husband had been accidentally drowned, but an overwhelming surprise and gratitude that God should care enough about her to want her to know the truth. In a sense the actual happening had become unimportant to her; the important thing was God's love.

We talked for a long time after this. I shared with her a little about the arrogant and possessive way in which I had tried to manage the lives of people that I loved. And that brought out from her

the fact that since her husband's death she had wilfully tried to do for her children everything that he would have done. She was even planning to deprive herself of the capital which he had left, and which she needed herself, in order to build a house for one of her sons and to provide additional expensive education for one of the girls. Her children did not want her to do this. They had the love that all young people have of doing things for themselves. But she had been determined. She surrendered this wilful plan, and her possessiveness of her children, when she surrendered her sorrow for her husband.

She celebrated, with a women's group at Calvary, the other day, her first year's anniversary of a God-directed life. She is a radiant person now. She will miss her husband as long as she lives, but she has learned what to do with sorrow. She uses it, and what has happened to her, in the lives of other people in sorrow, and God has greatly used her in this way.

I believe that this is a case typical of what social casework can do, and what religion can do. That woman could have been sent to Europe, or Florida, in order to forget; she could have been taken to a sanitarium in order to improve her health; she could have been sent to a psychiatrist because of her melancholia. But none of these things would have touched the root of the matter; only religion could do that.

There is not a social work job that is being well done that I would see given up. There are conditions in which we live, with which we *must* work, in order to make life tolerable for other people. I am as deeply interested as ever I was, in industrial and social conditions. But I have had, as my Quaker grandmother would have said, " the call " to another kind of work. For me it seems to be a full-time job. But I know, from seeing the lives of people around me, that those of us who work at earning our living, or at anything else, can still do what I consider God's first will, for all of us—bringing other people to Him.

There is not a person who reads this book who cannot bring to those with whom he works the power and the joy that comes with the experience of a God-directed life. We can help people to find out what to do with sorrow. But it's true for you, as it was for me, that the change must first come in yourself. If I had not known from personal experience what Christ can do in a life, I could not have made it real to any one else. In helping her to find Him, I myself had a deeper experience of His love. This is our unearned increment. As we work with other people, God works with us.

XII

"DO THEY STICK?"

THE rector had gone home, to Baltimore, to have his tonsils out. This seemed to be a good opportunity to hunt in his study for a lost sermon, for I shouldn't be in his way. I don't like unoccupied places, but instead of the oppressive silence and dull, dusty air of a closed apartment, the place was alive. A boy in his shirt sleeves threw open the door with a bang.

"Hello, Mrs. R.!" he said. "Great to see you. Come in."

The drawing-room looked strange. It was in the middle of February, but the piano was covered with Christmas cards. I felt a little wuzzy. I would have sworn that Mr. Shoemaker's secretary had cleared the cards away weeks before.

Round the corner came Frank Buchman.

"Hullo, Mrs. R.!" he said. "I'm so glad you came up to see me. Did you know that Sam has loaned me the rectory while he is away? Come and look at my Christmas cards. It's the first time since Christmas cards came in, that I have been able to spread them all out.—There's yours; it's a fine one. Of course I saw it when it came, but I do

like keeping them all out together." He was as happy as a small boy.

The first time he had been " able to spread out " his Christmas cards. I stopped a moment to realize what that meant.

Twenty-five years ago a young man, feeling the pressure of the sorrow and selfishness and aimlessness of the world around him, and the pressure of the willingness of God to make men's lives radiant and useful, gave himself and all that he had to God. Not much, seemingly, to give—the life of an untried boy with no material possessions.

But he had something stronger than his youth, more powerful than money. He had faith in God. In that faith he set out, obscurely, unobtrusively, to win, not the world, but men, one by one, for God. No vision of personal eminence was there, no desire to sway a crowd. Frank Buchman, the " pudding stick " of evangelical religion to-day, the spark of fire which sets fire to other lives, began his work then. He has at times had salaried positions in religious work, but they were temporary; a form of training for a larger job.

He has been around the world twice; has gone repeatedly to England, Holland, Belgium, Germany and to Australia and Java, and to all sorts of places in this country, not knowing how his next week's expenses were to be met, but with faith that since he was following God's will for his life, God would see that he was provided for. He has never

been without the money to care for his simple needs. He never asks for it, but from all sorts of unexpected places and persons it comes; grateful men and women in China, England, India, America, are guided to send him small sums. Sometimes one comes just in the nick of time to pay a hotel bill, or to buy a suit of clothes that he badly needs. But it always comes. He holds none of it against a future day if he is guided to share it with some one else. He lives more intensely and joyfully in the present moment than any one else that I have ever known. And literally all over the world are men and women who thank God for a new life which he has helped them find.

He began talking to me, that day in the rectory, about the family of the boy who had opened the door for me; glorious pagans but with bleak places in their lives. He wanted them to meet some of our crowd, to hear at first hand what religion can do. I suggested that he invite them to dine with me at the Cosmopolitan Club. He fell on the suggestion as a dog falls on a bone.

"Wonderful!" he said. "Will you really do it? We'll have a great time."

The day came, and with it a ring of the telephone.

"Mrs. R.! Please be perfectly frank. I've asked some extra people. We can go to a restaurant if it's too much for you to manage. But it's a great crowd."

It wasn't too much, and it proved to be a great

crowd. Excepting that we were perhaps having a better time than most of the other parties, we could not have been distinguished from them. The women were well-dressed and attractive, the men typical successful business-men; across the table from me was one with all the assurance of the person who controls situations.

"I'm interested in your crowd, and I didn't realize this was to be just an ordinary dinner party," he said. "Now, this matter of guidance: Mrs. R., do you mind if I ask a question or two? I don't want to bust things up, but I'm interested."

We were off. The purpose of the party was working out! F. B. doesn't ram religion down people's throats. This man couldn't have been reached by a meeting or a church service, or by any kind of formal attack. But he was curious about F. B., and the interesting setting, the delightful women, the Dutch gentleman of title at my side, the gay talk, attracted him. He found himself in what seemed to be his own world. He was at home, and he drove his questions at us as he would have driven questions at a crowd who offered him a possibly desirable investment. Before he left we had a quiet time in the now deserted dining-room. He didn't believe that he could get guidance, but he did, and guidance of such significance that he is coming presently to a house party, where he frankly hopes to find for himself the thing we all talked about.

After they had gone the boy ran one hand through F. B.'s arm, and the other through mine, and in the empty hall outside the dressing-room doors we pranced up and down rejoicing. I don't know how they felt, but for the moment at least I was a buccaneer of God!

Do they stick? F. B. has stuck for twenty-five years.

It was ten days or so before I went to the rectory again. Mr. Shoemaker, with his tonsils permanently gone, and his voice temporarily gone, was at his desk. He couldn't talk, but I could. I told him a little about how much F. B. had enjoyed the use of the rectory; that he had had the joy of home to the full, for a week, and then had gladly left it for whatever came next. We talked a little about him; lovingly, tenderly, with affectionate laughter.

I looked at the younger man before me, who owed everything to the older one we had been talking about. He was born on a great country estate in Maryland, where his people had lived for several generations. I thought of James, the dignified negro butler with whom he had played as a child; of the big stone milk house where he had held services as a boy for all the servants on the place, indoor and out; of his membership in a fashionable club while he was at Princeton; of the many doors open to him because of his family's social position and wealth.

I thought of the needs in his life as a young man, the arrogance, conflicts, prides, sins, and of the day when as a missionary in China he faced with Frank Buchman, not the popular, successful young man that the world saw, who longed to serve his kind through church organization, but the man who was a failure because he could not win men for Christ. The man who had to deal with his own life before he could deal with other people's. The ambitious man who had to lay ambition aside.

I thought of a night eight years later when I had been invited to dine at the rectory. I was early, and before Mr. Shoemaker arrived a message came from a mother, frantic about her son. He was drinking himself to death, and at that moment was making a row in a big hotel.

" I'm sorry, Mrs. R.," the rector said, " but I'm needed up there. Will you forgive me if I leave you to dine alone? You are staying in New York in order to go to the early service to-morrow, aren't you? " I was. The wife of a vestryman across the square had offered me a bed, for I live twenty miles out of New York. " Do come and breakfast with me after the service, to make up for to-night."

The next morning Mr. Shoemaker joined me on the church porch.

" I was with that man until one o'clock, and he took communion just now for the first time in ten years." I shall never forget the light in his face as he told me this. " It's the thing for him to have

breakfast with me, and it will go better if we are alone. Will you forgive me again?"

No hour of the day or night is his own. In the three years that I have known him I have never seen him do anything just for pleasure. He rides horseback at home in Maryland, and here in Central Park, not only because he loves horses, but because sometimes it's the quickest way to get rested. He plays games riotously on the roof of Calvary House with men of the staff, for he has to have exercise—and it's a good thing, anyhow, to play with them! He will go to a concert or the opera joyfully, for he loves music and is no mean musician himself. But he goes only on guidance, and because there is some one with whom he needs that kind of contact. He will go away occasionally into the country, to escape the ringing of the doorbell and the telephone, but with him goes an armful of books and usually a typewriter!

With it all, with this underlying, undergirding consciousness of what life is for, there is nothing in him of the prig. He takes each hour at the full of the tide, enjoys it, uses it. His extraordinary charm draws all kinds of people to him, but he has no possessive friendships. Some men are humanly closer to him than others, I suppose, but he will give himself day by day, week by week, year by year, to draw the life of a drunk, or a Pharisee, or a person obsessed by nervous fears—people sometimes absolutely unattractive by ordinary stand-

ards. He never knows they are unattractive, for he always sees what they may be if their lives become possessed of Christ. He understands us, and so he loves us all, not for what we are, but for what, with God's help, we may be.

He owes the fulness and joy and the compelling usefulness of his life to an obscure Lutheran minister, who first won him for Christ and then taught him how to win others.

"Do they stick?" Sam Shoemaker has stuck for eleven years.

"Do they stick?" All over the place are people like myself who have "stuck" for a number of years, and at Calvary Mission there are men who have "stuck" for the first twenty-four hours, and men who have "stuck" for their first twenty years.

XIII

THE MOTIVE POWER

NO attempt has been made here to tell the whole story. The fabric of the situation which is Calvary changes daily as lives are changed, and we see their impact on other lives. It would be possible to be vividly accurate about buildings or organizations, but when you try to set down in words the work of the Holy Spirit, you can only hope to catch here and there a gleam of what happens.

If I have made anything plain, I hope it is that our first concern is with our own lives. Unless we are easier to live with at home, more truly friendly to our servants and our employes, more alive to the woman who sits next to us in the subway, to the man from whom we buy our supplies, unless we are learning to lay aside possessiveness about our belongings and our friendships, unless we are readier to spend ourselves in unselfish love for others, we have not really found "the way."

After all, the thing that I have been talking about can only be done if we ourselves, in absolute humbleness of spirit face whatever we know is wrong in our own lives, clear it and then, with the

guidance of the Holy Spirit, stand ready to have God use us as a channel through which His love can flow. Doing personal work is, I suppose, the most humbling experience that any of us can have, for by ourselves we can do absolutely nothing. It is only by the power of God through us that we can help other people.

A great psychiatrist told me last winter, when we had been talking about the work at Calvary, that psychiatry has learned to make an accurate diagnosis and to furnish a good plan, but that psychiatry has no motive power to make the patient accept the plan.

Experience of God is to be had by any one who truly seeks it. Sharing our experience with others is something that we all can learn to do directly and effectively. Not through theological discussion, but by telling what Christ has done in our own lives, and in the lives of people we know.

The thing that I long to see in the world to-day is men and women whose lives have been so shot through with practical knowledge of God that, having themselves found motive power, they can give it to the people with whom they live and work.

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